This book is of most value to research workers in the field but should also form a useful reference for general readers wishing to familiarise themselves with the latest techniques and results of specific aspects of hepatitis research. It is not aimed at the practising clinician.

G O RECORD

Computed body tomography, with MRI correlation.

Edited by Joseph K T Lee, Stuart S Sagel and Robert J Stanley. (Pp. 1168; illustrated; \$175.) New York: Raven Press, 1989.

The second edition of what many regard as the standard reference text on extracranial computed tomography has been updated to give an integrated approach to both CT and MRI as well as covering new uses of CT including interventional. There are 27 new contributors and because of their writing skills and clever editorship the work appears seamless. I was not aware that this was a multiauthor work.

Early chapters concisely explain the physics and instrumentation of CT and MRI, standard techniques for both of these examinations being elucidated in a systematic way. Imaging of the major organ systems commences with the neck and proceeds down to the pelvis, finally covering the musculoskeletal system, spine, paediatrics and radiation oncology. In each of these chapters the expert contributors from the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology and the University of Alabama at Birmingham detail the applications of CT and MRI to various diseases, stressing the practicality of procedures, their interpretation and the differential diagnoses. Computed tomography and MRI sections usually dovetail neatly together, it being sensible to devote less space and imaging to MRI.

I particularly liked the lucidity of this work, whether in describing normal abdominal and pelvic anatomy, the 'tiger territory' of the neck, or the large and expanded section on the gastro-intestinal tract. Perhaps the strongest section is the thorax and mediastinum, there being much new material on cardiac imaging. The chapter describing the peritoneal cavity and its recesses by Jay Heiken is a model of clarity.

The final chapter treads the murky waters of the economics and politics of CT and MRI and points out the MRI whilst certainly a diagnostic procedure for neuroradiology and some musculoskeletal applications, is still evolving in its application to body imaging. In discussing the dramatic explosion of CT since the 1970's the American authors have given generous praise to its British founder Sir Godfrey Hounsfield ('Mr Hounsfield').

Illustrations are of uniformly high quality and are

profuse. They are strategically placed within the text and where applicable correlate with other imaging techniques and with pathological findings. This excellent book is the Gideon's Bible of the scanner suite. Radiologists involved in imaging should have one available for self reference as well as demonstration to colleagues in gastroenterology and other clinical specialities.

ROBERT DICK

An illustrated guide to gastrointestinal motility. By D Kumar and S Gustavsson. (Pp. 470; illustrated; £65.) Chichester: Wiley, 1988.

As a longstanding enthusiast of the study of gastrointestinal motility I found this a most interesting book with its wide range of subject matter and authors. My problems with the illustrated guide relate to these wide ranges. The pattern of the guide comprises three chapters of basic structure, then 10 chapters of methodology, followed by seven chapters on normal findings, with abnormal findings in the last eight chapters. It is not surprising that much of the material is repeated. It is most difficult to write about one's findings without mentioning the methods used. It is also mandatory to mention ranges of normal when noting abnormal findings. Add to this the inevitable variability of approach when 39 authors are involved and a most uneven standard of presentation results. It is most interesting for someone familiar with the field to have a compendium of the evidence of these experts. I am not sure whether a neophyte would not be better served by a more succinct text and fewer illustrations. The illustrations are in the main clear apart from some of the radiographs and scintographs which can be difficult to follow.

The stated aim of the editors in their preface was to provide 'a practical approach to gastrointestinal motility problems' and 'to define areas where motility studies are of established value and those in which they still only have investigational merit'. It is not clear to me that they have been able to transmit their concepts to their contributors, in particular to indicate in what proportion of cases motility measurements have a decisive influence on therapy.

HERBERT DUTHIE

Alimentary, my dear doctor. Edited by C Hawkins. (Pp. 140; illustrated; £4.95.) Oxford: Radcliffe Medical Press, 1988.

Despite being listed as 'Medical anecdotes and humour', this is not just another Christmas stocking filler. It is an anthology of anecdotes, essays and verses from members of the General Practitioners Writers Association. It can be recommended as good light reading for almost anyone except gastro-